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13 January 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD.

SUBJECT: Cuban Delegation Planning to Come to Washington

SP. At 1730 hours 12 January Mr. Barnes was given a summary of our present information concerning subject, which consisted of the following items: 1. *The purpose of the caravan is*

a. To thank President Eisenhower for the \$1,000,000 relief fund made available for Cuban refugees.

b. To thank the Peruvian Ambassador for the break in relations between Peru and Cuba.

c. To try to get an audience with the OAS in order to influence other Latin American countries to break relations with Cuba.

2. According to a Bender source (AMCLATTER-1) who talked with Tony Varona, Varona considers this a completely unilateral operation, i.e., an Autentico Party operation. It was arranged by Tony through one Ernesto Rojas who contacted White House officials Hopkins and White. Also involved are Manolo Brana, Jose Antonio Maestre and an MRR man named Jose Antonio Mendez. (AMCLATTER-1 also mentioned a (fnu) Manolin Hernandez, a wealthy sugar man connected with the Reforma Central.) AMCLATTER-1 had no information concerning the size of the group although estimates seem to run from a few hundred to about a thousand.

3. From Mr. Jacobs we hear that Rojas is an unofficial delegate of AMBIDDY and lives at 6711 Glencarlyn Drive, Lake Barcroft, Falls Church, JEfferson 2-5598. A call to this number was answered by Rojas' wife who said yes, he is connected with the matter of 1,000 signatures for presentation to Eisenhower.

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4. Bill Kent reported from Miami that Rojas is working with Manuel Brana and in New York with Jose Antonio Mestre, alias Jose Agustine Mendez. Rojas talked to Mr. White and Mr. Hopkins of the White House Staff in Pennsylvania recently.

5. AMCLATTER-1 also reported that Tony Varona said he was dealing with Eduardo Gonzalez, a Rescate man in New York, who was bringing down 300 people from New York in addition to the unspecified number of people coming from Miami.

6. AMCLATTER-1 commented that when Rasco found out about the proposed trip he called the MDC representative, name unknown, in New York and told him to see that the movement was stopped since it was not FDR-sponsored. Eduardo Gonzalez called Varona to try to get the MDC representative to lay off, which Tony did, assuring Rasco that this was his own personal operation.

7. Mr. Stanulis suggested that Mr. Barnes should make it quite clear in any conversations at the White House that we seriously doubt that at this stage Varona or anyone else can exert very much control if the delegation comes to Washington. This seems obvious since by now not only does it seem that several groups in addition to Varona's were initially involved in the organization of the cavalcade but others may well try to get into the act.

8. We have been promised through the Bender channel more precise information on when the cavalcade will arrive but given the somewhat confused picture one cannot count on receiving advance word.

Note: See memorandum to A/DDP/A, subject "Jose Manuel Brana Duran."

R.E. Whedbee
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REWhedbee:lrh (13 Jan 1961)

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